

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICES AGENCY  
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**FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

**LS 6309**

**BILL NUMBER:** SB 296

**NOTE PREPARED:** Dec 23, 2012

**BILL AMENDED:**

**SUBJECT:** Free State Park Admission for Disabled Veterans.

**FIRST AUTHOR:** Sen. Randolph

**BILL STATUS:** As Introduced

**FIRST SPONSOR:**

**FUNDS AFFECTED:** X GENERAL  
X DEDICATED  
FEDERAL

**IMPACT:** State

**Summary of Legislation:** This bill provides that a disabled Hoosier veteran may not be charged a fee for a Golden Hoosier Passport, which entitles the holder, the holder's vehicle, and passengers in the holder's vehicle to unlimited admission to state parks and other Department of Natural Resources (DNR) properties for which an admission fee is charged.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2013.

**Explanation of State Expenditures:**

**Explanation of State Revenues:** *Summary:* Potential annual revenue loss related to eligible disabled veterans who currently purchase a Golden Hoosier Passport is estimated to be \$3,000. There may be some additional revenue loss under the bill due to persons who would apply for the Passport due to becoming eligible for the full fee exemption. Revenue collected from the sale of Golden Hoosier Passports goes toward funding operations of the DNR.

**Background Information:** The bill provides that a resident who is eligible for a license plate for a veteran with a disability is eligible to receive the Golden Hoosier Passport at no charge. The fee for a Golden Hoosier Passport will be \$20 in CY 2013; 50% of the fee charged for an annual entrance pass. Golden Hoosier Passports entitle the resident, the resident's motor vehicle, and passengers in the vehicle to unlimited admission to Indiana state parks, recreation areas, reservoirs, forests, and other DNR properties for which admission is charged during the year for which the Passport was issued.

The DNR has no data indicating the number of Golden Hoosier Passports that are purchased by eligible disabled Hoosier veterans. When the Golden Hoosier passports are used, the eligible resident must be present in the automobile and able to prove eligibility. The Bureau of Motor Vehicles reported almost 9,000 Disabled Hoosier Veteran and Disabled Veteran plates were sold for 2012. If it is assumed that license plate sales represent the number of disabled veterans, and all 9,000 disabled veterans currently purchase a Golden Hoosier Passport, the DNR would experience a maximum annual reduction in revenue of \$180,000 (9,000 x \$20). That assumption is unlikely since disabled veterans may have up to two plates on vehicles and the plates are issued to individuals that have service-connected mobility related disabilities. (The plates authorize the use of handicapped parking privileges.)

Currently, only about 1.67% of the eligible population purchases a Golden Hoosier Passport (20,000 purchased /1.2 million eligible to purchase). If that percentage is applied to the number of disabled veteran plates issued, then 150 disabled veterans might be estimated to be currently purchasing the Passport. Exempting this size group from the \$20 fee would be estimated to result in an annual revenue loss of \$3,000. There may be some additional revenue loss under the bill due to persons that would apply for the Passport due to eligibility for the full fee exemption.

Eligibility for the Disabled Hoosier Veteran license plate is determined by the severity of a service-connected disability and the impact of that disability on mobility. Since the Disabled Hoosier Veteran license plate authorizes handicapped parking privileges, the veteran must have a service-connected disability that limits walking. No more than two Disabled Hoosier Veteran license plates may be issued to each eligible applicant.

The DNR reports the following revenue and sales data for Golden Hoosier Passports.

Calendar Year	Passes Sold	Revenue
2011	19,269	\$346,842
2012	19,891	\$358,040

Under current law, residents who are (1) 65 years of age and older, (2) eligible for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) payments, or (3) eligible for Disabled Hoosier Veteran license plates are eligible to purchase the Golden Hoosier Passport for \$20 for use during CY 2013. Persons eligible for a Prisoner of War license plate are eligible for a 100% fee exemption.

**Explanation of Local Expenditures:**

**Explanation of Local Revenues:**

**State Agencies Affected:** DNR

**Local Agencies Affected:**

**Information Sources:** DNR, Bureau of Motor Vehicles.

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